



STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

NEWS RELEASE

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Date: June 28, 2023

NH STATE PRISON FOR MEN HOLDS GRADUATION CEREMONY FOR 8 RESIDENTS

Concord, NH – The New Hampshire Department of Corrections hosted a graduation ceremony on Tuesday, honoring five residents receiving their high school diploma, two residents who completed their HiSET exam, and one resident who earned his bachelor's degree from New England College.

Donning traditional caps and gowns, residents were congratulated by Senators Shannon Chandley, Howard Pearl, and Becky Whitley, as well as Department of Corrections officials, and invited family and friends. Residents graduating from Granite State High School are now able to enroll in college level classes in pursuit of their associate or bachelor's degrees. The opportunity for individuals who are incarcerated to receive their college degree recently increased due to the reauthorization of the Second Chance Pell Grant, and the department's collaboration with White Mountain Community College and NHTI Concord's Community College. The HiSET exam is the High School Equivalency Test and is an alternative to a United States High School Diploma and the GED test.

"Practically speaking, an education is a successful path for anyone but consider how that path is traveled during incarceration. The graduates today made the right choice, in a tough environment, to focus on their personal and professional growth through their educational achievements," said New Hampshire Department of Corrections Commissioner Helen Hanks. "Our certified educators and community collegial partners, support adult learners in a prison setting to achieve goals they never thought possible, and, in some cases, they didn't think they deserved. By providing people with the opportunity to earn, for some a high school diploma and others a post-secondary degree, we are being transformative by changing the students' lives, advancing the positive interactions they have with families and friends and ultimately, we better of our communities."

Dr. Lowell Matthews, Associate Professor of Business Administration and Management delivered the graduation's keynote address. In his speech, he encouraged graduates to stay close to those family members and friends who are supportive of their educational journey, saying, "as you are going out there with these new experiences, and you have this light, this motivation to continue achieving, and to continue pushing yourself, the motivation for that is the people you see in front of you, your supporters."

In addition to the speech given by Dr. Matthews, residents listened to an address given by one of their fellow graduates.

Granite State High School is part of a special school district within the New Hampshire Department of Corrections, established by law under an interagency agreement with the Department of Education. It employs a full contingent of qualified educators who teach basic high school classes, such as English, math, and science, as well as other specialized programs.



2023 New Hampshire State Prison for Men Graduates pictured with Senators Whitley, Pearl, and Chandley, along with Commissioner Hanks and Dr. Lowell Matthews.

Courtesy Photo

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